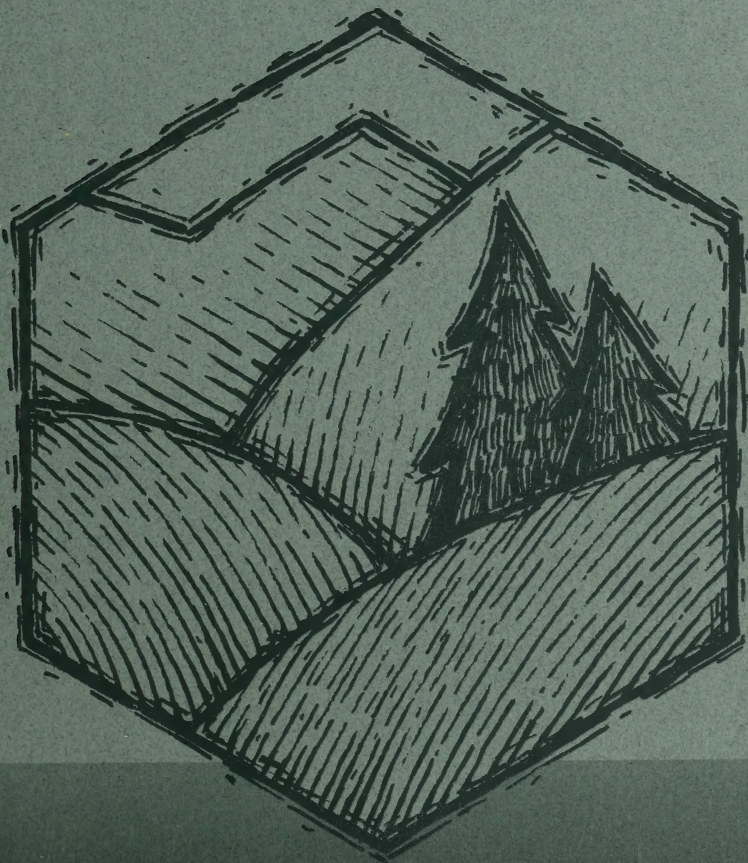


CRIMSON LAKE

PROVINCIAL PARK

Management Plan



PREFACE

Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Plan

The Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Plan provides a long-term vision and day-to-day guidance for park users and staff, within the context of existing legislation and regulations, prepared the plan. It outlines the type and extent of outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities, facilities and services. The plan provides direction regarding the delivery of heritage appreciation programs that assist Albertans and visitors to understand and appreciate our natural heritage while ensuring its ongoing preservation.

The management plan was developed with public input and is intended to provide for the periodic review and revision to reflect the current thinking of Albertans on how our natural heritage will be preserved for present and future generations.

The Minister responsible for parks and protected areas has authorized the implementation of the management plan and retains authority to amend or suspend its provisions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The team responsible for the preparation of the Management Plan included Dorey Armstrong, Myra Jensen, Lee Hickey, Archie Lacaille and Maureen Lynch. The contribution by members of the public who took time to participate in the public input process is also gratefully acknowledged.

**ALBERTA PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

November 2002



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

The Crimson Lake Provincial Park management plan provides a long-term vision and day-to-day guidance for stewardship of the park. Department staff, within the context of existing legislation and regulations, prepared the plan. It outlines the type and extent of outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities, facilities and services. The plan provides direction regarding the delivery of heritage appreciation programs that assist Albertans and visitors to understand and appreciate our natural heritage while ensuring its ongoing preservation.

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2.4	Public Involvement	4
2.5	Management Issues	7
3.0	ROLE IN ALBERTA'S PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK	8
3.1	Classification	8
3.2	Natural Values Threat Assessment	9
3.3	Purpose and Objectives of Crimson Lake Provincial Park	11
3.3.1	Preservation	11
3.3.2	Heritage Appreciation	11
3.3.3	Outdoor Recreation	11
3.3.4	Wildlife	11

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1.0 PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN	1
2.0 OVERVIEW	2
2.1 Setting	2
2.2 Natural Features	2
2.2.1 Geology, Soils and Sand Dunes	2
2.2.2 Climate	2
2.2.3 Water and Watershed	3
2.2.4 Vegetation and Wildlife	3
2.3 Recreation Features	4
2.3.1 Historical and Cultural Resources	5
2.3.2 Leased Lands	5
2.3.3 Private Sector Involvement	6
2.4 Public Involvement	6
2.5 Management Issues	7
3.0 ROLE IN ALBERTA'S PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK	8
3.1 Classification	8
3.2 Natural Region Theme Representation	8
3.3 Purpose and Objectives of Crimson Lake Provincial Park	10
3.3.1 Preservation	11
3.3.2 Heritage Appreciation	11
3.3.3 Outdoor Recreation	12
3.3.4 Tourism	12
4.0 ZONING	13
4.1 Facility Zone	13
4.2 Natural Environment Zone	13

	<u>Page</u>
5.0 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES	14
5.1 Resource Protection and Management Guidelines	14
5.1.1 Wildlife	14
5.1.2 Vegetation	14
5.1.3 Aquatics	15
5.1.4 Fire Management	15
5.1.5 Emergency Response	16
5.2 Heritage Appreciation Management Guidelines	16
5.3 Recreation and Tourism Management Guidelines	17
5.3.1 Campgrounds	17
5.3.2 Day Use	18
5.3.3 Boating	19
5.3.4 Trails	20
5.3.5 Roads	21
5.3.6 Special Events	21
5.3.7 Commercial Activities	21
5.3.8 Park Shop and Office	22
5.4 The Role of the Private Sector	22
6.0 LAND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES	23
6.1 Cottage Subdivisions	23
6.2 Pioneer Ranch Camp	24
6.3 Energy Developments	24
6.4 Park Expansion	25
7.0 SURROUNDING LAND USE	26
8.0 COORDINATION GUIDELINES	27
9.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW	28

APPENDICES

Appendix I: List of Key Resource References _____ 29

Appendix II: Action Requirements _____ 30

LIST OF MAPS

Crimson Lake Provincial Park Location Map _____ after pg 2

Natural Regions and Sub Regions of Alberta Map _____ after pg 9

Zoning Map _____ after pg 13

Park Expansion Recommendation Map _____ after pg 25

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of this management plan is to outline the management intent of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and provide overall direction on how the park will be protected, operated and maintained in future years. This plan provides the overall direction for park programming, development, maintenance and protection practices. For the purposes of this management plan, all references to Crimson Lake Provincial Park include the Twin Lakes area, unless otherwise noted. The park is the primary responsibility of Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas).

Specifically, this management plan will:

- Identify the role that Crimson Lake Provincial Park plays within the system of parks and protected areas across Alberta.
- Define park program objectives for preservation, heritage appreciation, outdoor recreation, and tourism.
- Place existing park facilities and programs in context with program objectives.
- Identify park issues and concerns and recommend remedial action, where necessary.
- Identify park upgrading and development requirements to meet program objectives.
- Review opportunities and establish priorities for the addition or deletion of lands to Crimson Lake Provincial Park.
- Outline the public involvement process used in plan development for the park.

2.0 OVERVIEW

2.1 Setting

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is 3,209 hectares in size and located 16 kilometers west of the Town of Rocky Mountain House. The park is comprised of two units: Crimson Lake (situated eight miles north and west of Rocky Mountain House) and Twin Lakes (located three miles south of Crimson Lake). Together, the two sites are known as Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is located in central Alberta and lies on the edge of two important natural regions: the boreal forest to the northeast, and the lower foothills to the west. The western limit of the aspen parkland lies a short distance east of the park. The park is highly accessible to local, regional and provincial residents and visitors via the David Thompson Highway (Highway 11) and secondary Highway 756, both of which are paved.

(See Crimson Lake Provincial Park Location Map, next page)

2.2 Natural Features

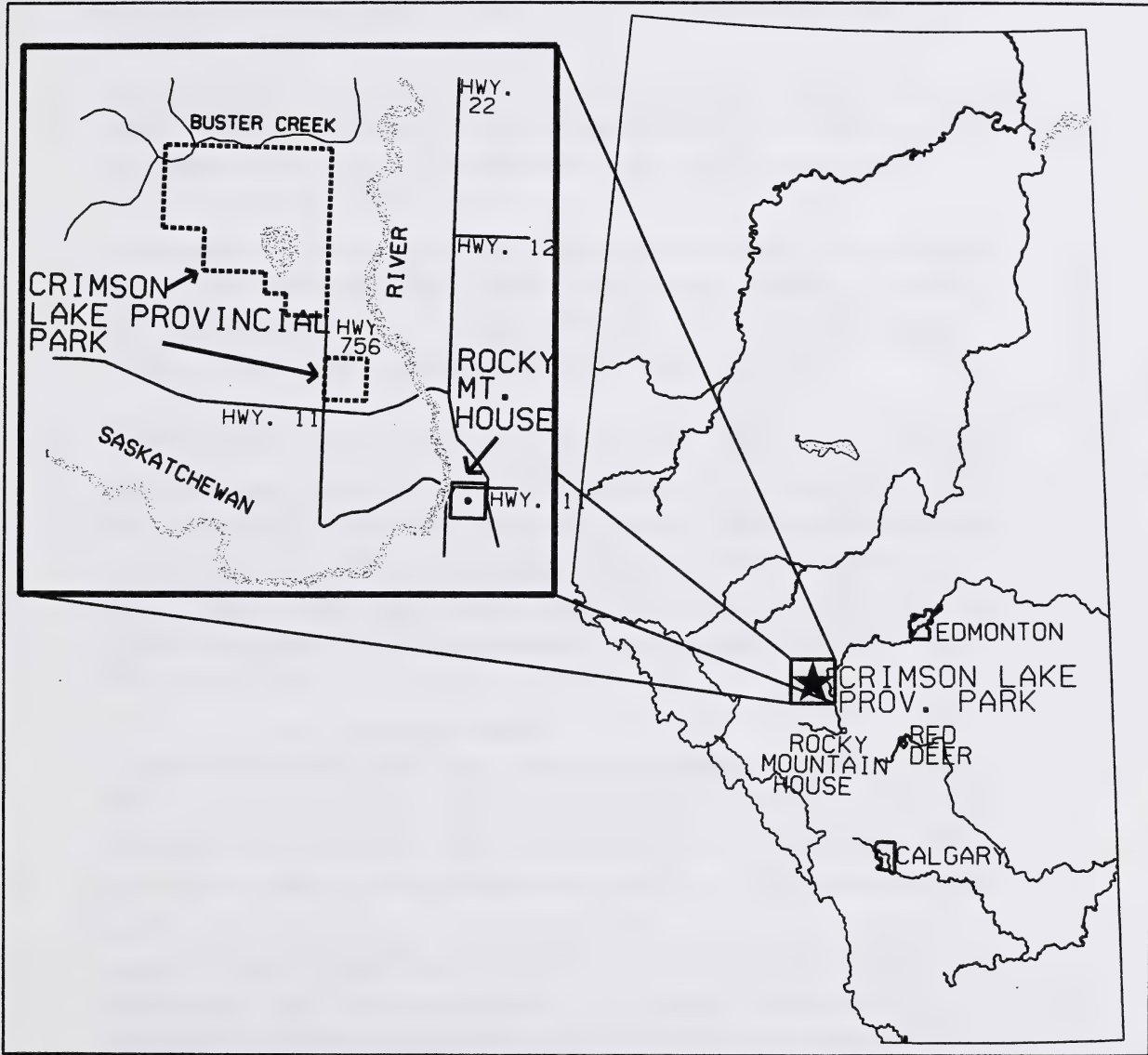
2.2.1 Geology, Soils and Sand Dunes

Approximately 20,000 years ago, great depths of sedimentary material were deposited in the Crimson Lake area through glaciation when the northern continental ice sheet met a smaller ice sheet moving from the west. When the ice began to melt, rivers formed carrying away finer, smaller particles and leaving coarser gravelly outwash deposits. These rivers flowed into lakes held by the ice front, depositing sand and creating alluvial deposits. The finest particles, silts and clays settled out of the still lake waters to form lacustrine deposits. Once the area dried, the sandy deposits were re-sorted by the wind into dunes and aeolian deposits. Following deglaciation, organic soils and bogs slowly developed.

Organic deposits cover most of the central portion of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and are the most widespread surficial deposits in the park. Sand dunes are found in the eastern portion of the park and sand is found throughout most of the southeastern portion. Well over three-quarters of the park is classified as muskeg. Soil on the uplands is shallow, sandy and of low fertility. Numerous deposits of medium to moderately fine textured lacustrine deposits occur in the north and northeastern portions of the park. Alluvial deposits are found along the park's streams and drainage channels. The Ferrier Field, rich in hydrocarbon minerals, encompasses the entire area of the park.

2.2.2 Climate

Crimson Lake Provincial Park experiences a typical continental climate with long, cold winters and short, hot summers. The summer recreation season usually runs from late May to early September. The winter recreation season typically runs from November to March.



2.2.3 Water and Watershed

Crimson Lake occupies an area of 240 hectares and is approximately one mile long and one-half mile wide. This shallow, reedy, spring-fed lake is mesotrophic and dystrophic in nature and is characterized with abundant aquatic vegetation and brown coloured water. As such, the natural environment of Crimson Lake offers limited opportunities for recreational activities.

Crimson Lake lies within the boundaries of the North Saskatchewan River drainage basin. Prentice Creek, in the southeast portion of the lake, and Buster Creek in the northwest, run through the lake to the North Saskatchewan River which flows northward approximately one mile east of the park.

The shoreline of Crimson Lake, and the northern portion of the park, is characterized by patterned fens, marshes and bogs. At the north end of the lake is an island where loon nesting sometimes takes place. Several standing bodies of water exist within the boundaries of Crimson Lake Provincial Park. Vegetated swamps almost completely surround all open standing bodies of water and many in-between areas.

The Twin Lakes, as the name implies, are comprised of two lakes and are often known as West and East Twin. A distance of less than 700 metres separates the lakes and both have clear water. West Twin is relatively deep and is referred to in this management plan as Twin Lake. East Twin is extremely shallow and is usually only discussed in reference to the deeper lake. Twin Lake is a deep spring-fed lake, which is stocked regularly with rainbow trout. Portions of the shoreline of Twin Lake are characterized with bogs and marshes, some of which contain rare plant species. The outflow stream from Twin Lake, a fork of Poplar Creek, flows northwest from the lake and eventually enters the North Saskatchewan River.

2.2.4 Vegetation/Wildlife

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is part of a provincially significant sand dune-wetland complex, being one of only a few foothill areas where large diverse patterned wetlands are associated with extensive sand deposits. The wetland diversity varies from sedge and swamp birch fens to tamarack swamps and open water, providing an ideal setting for rare and uncommon plants such as the slender-leaved sundew and the round-leaved bog orchid.

The three main vegetation types found in the park are: bogs/fens; lodgepole pine-dominant woods, and; aspen-dominant woods. Vegetation in the bog/fen area includes horsetail, arrow-grass, wire rush, black spruce, roses, raspberry and wintergreen. Vegetation in the lodgepole pine-dominant woods includes ground juniper, bearded wheat grass and western wood lily. Willows, green alder and saskatoon can be found within the aspen-dominant woods.

The northern portion of Crimson Lake Provincial Park is characterized by vast expanses of slow growing acidic black spruce muskeg, larch swamp, watery open grass and moss

bog which organize into complicated geometric patterned fens that cover poorly-drained lowlands and flats. The backcountry within the park boundary contains some of the only examples of patterned fens found in Alberta's provincial parks. The fens are associated with varying thickness of waterlogged peat. Trees are widely spaced or in close formation according to the depth of the water table. The fen patterns are the result of a combination of frost action, water and nutrient flow and a cyclical regeneration of the vegetation itself.

The bog-fen area of the park is also home to a number of rare and uncommon plants, including slender-leaved sundews and round-leaved orchids. The park land surrounding Crimson Lake is a transitional area where boreal forest, aspen parkland and foothills forests come together.

Wildlife within Crimson Lake Provincial Park includes moose, elk, wolf, cougar, mule/white-tailed deer, black bear, red squirrel, chipmunk, hare, porcupine, beaver and muskrat. The park also supports a wide diversity of bird species, including blue heron, boreal owl, northern pygmy owl, common loon, ruby-crowned kinglet, boreal chickadee, sandhill crane, yellow-bellied sapsucker, ruffed grouse, osprey, and Tennessee warbler.

2.3 Recreation Features

Recreation features of Crimson Lake Provincial Park include camping, picnicking, beach activities, swimming, boating, and trail use at Crimson Lake, and camping, picnicking, fishing, and trail use at Twin Lakes. Both sites offer day use, campground and group areas.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is open year-round. Residents of Rocky Mountain House, Red Deer, Calgary, Edmonton and surrounding areas are the primary visitors to the park. Local area residents and local cottagers contribute primarily as day-use visitors. The highest use for camping and day-use occurs on weekends during the summer season with campgrounds at full or near full capacity on long weekends.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park offers an extensive trail system (for walking, cycling and cross-country skiing) which takes visitors into the natural areas of the park, winding through black spruce bogs, tamarack swamps, open sedge, shrub fens and the typical foothills vegetation of lodgepole pine and aspen. The 10-kilometre Amerada Trail, built by Amerada Resources Ltd., starts at the day-use area at Crimson Lake and encircles the entire lake. A trail link connects the Crimson Lake area to Twin Lakes and into the Rocky Mountain House (built by Petro Canada Ltd.) and the regional trail network. Ten kilometers of trails are groomed within the park for cross-country skiing.

Twin Lakes offers rustic day-use and camping opportunities in a pine forest with easy access to the lake for swimming, boating and fishing. The lake is stocked with rainbow trout. Twin Lakes features a series of boardwalks that connect to an island with a floating pier. A boat launch is located at the day use area. There is a 12-km speed limit on the lake. A group area is located at the south end of the lake.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park had 84,268 visitors in 1999/2000, including 34,375 campers, 3,143 group campers and 46,750 day use visitors. Overall, total visitation to the park has remained relatively constant over the past 10 years, with consistent visitor numbers in the campsite use, group use and day use areas.

2.3.1 Historical and Cultural Resources

In 1912, a man working with a survey crew discovered a nearby lake at sunset. The striking colours of the setting sun reflecting on the waters caused him to name it Crimson Lake. The lake has played an important recreational role in the Rocky Mountain House area since the 1920s.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park was officially opened in 1951 and at that time, encompassed 688 hectares. In 1975, the addition of the Twin Lakes area provided the park with a rustic camping opportunity including recreational activity based upon the lake's fishery. Crimson Lake Provincial Park has grown over the years to its present size of 3,209 hectares, providing increased protection to the wildlife and unique land base found in the area.

Five prehistoric sites have been identified within Crimson Lake Provincial Park, featuring flakes, fire-cracked rock and raised dunes. Archaeological studies rate the park as low in value in terms of archaeological significance; the occasional pieces of cultural material (limited entirely to lithics) have been removed from along the lakeshore mostly as isolated finds from test pits near the lake edge.

2.3.2 Leased Lands

Crimson Lake Provincial Park contains the following leased land areas.

- **Cottages:** A cottage subdivision, established in 1932, is located along the western shoreline of Crimson Lake. The subdivision is composed of 89 cottages and associated outbuildings. The cottage lots are leased from the park, for 25-year lease periods.
- **Pioneer Ranch Camp:** Pioneer Ranch Camp is located on a 99.6-acre lease on the northeast shore of Crimson Lake. It is composed of a number of camp structures, including a main lodge, shower house, sleeping cabins, outdoor amphitheatres, archery lanes, piers, trails, horse corrals, and barn. The camp is situated on park-owned land, with a 25-year lease. The camp is run by the Inter-University Christian Fellowship of Canada and offers year-round youth programming, including a summer boys and girls program with archery, climbing, horseback riding, swimming, bible study, outdoor living skills and canoeing. Winter programs include sleigh rides and cross country skiing.
- **Energy Developments:** Crimson Lake Provincial Park is situated over the Ferrier Field, a rich oil producing area in the Cardium Formation. The first mineral surface leases granted in the park occurred in the most westerly sections in 1957.

Drilling began in 1965 and has since developed rapidly. Today, 256 dispositions exist within Crimson Lake Provincial Park, of which 167 are related to energy production. They comprise of well sites, water sites, pipelines, access roads, cathodic protection installations, and pipeline replacement projects. A single company, Petro Canada holds the majority of energy dispositions within the park, which uses a water injection method to maximize oil recovery.

2.3.3 Private Sector Involvement

The private sector is currently involved in Crimson Lake Provincial Park in the areas of campground operations and concession services. The services are consistent with province-wide standards and the *Provincial Parks Act, Regulations, Policies and Procedures*.

Historically, the park has worked in partnership with groups such as the Alberta Tourism Education Council and the Lions Club, and businesses such as Esso. Each July, Crimson Lake Provincial Park hosts a Parks Day celebration in partnership with Parks Canada and local community groups. Trail signs in the park are a cost-shared project between the Alberta Government, the David Thompson Trail Run Committee, Rek Trek Resources Ltd., and the Crimson Lake Cabin Owners Association. The park's 10-km Amerada Trail is a cooperative effort of Amerada Minerals Corporation of Canada and the Alberta Government. Petro Canada built the park's amphitheater.

2.4 Public Involvement

Public involvement has formed a major part of the planning process for Crimson Lake Provincial Park. Public input has been generally supportive of current park management practices. Overall, stakeholders and visitors have indicated that they are happy with how the park is being managed and have stated that they do not want to see any significant changes in park management.

This management plan was developed through the assistance of public input. Opportunities for public involvement included public meetings, workshops, newsletter updates, and visitor surveys. Specifically, an open house meeting was held in May 2000 to gather public input for this management plan. In the summer, fall and winter of 2000, a management plan brochure, with a feedback questionnaire, was distributed to stakeholders and park visitors. Stakeholder meetings were also held with the energy companies active within the park, and with the park facility operator. A boating workshop was held in April 2001 to address public concerns over the issue of boating on Crimson Lake. A draft copy of this management plan was available for public review and comment during the summer of 2001. Opportunities for public input included a Parks Day open house, a display at the Visitor Centre, and mailing of a plan summary.

Public input was received in the form of cards, letters, brochures, phone calls, faxes, e-mails and in-person comments.

2.5 Management Issues

A number of management issues have been identified at Crimson Lake Provincial Park and they are addressed in this management plan. Public-generated issues include concerns about boating congestion on Crimson Lake, and requests for improvements to campsites, showers, washrooms, interpretative programs and trails. Boating on Crimson Lake is the primary concern of stakeholders and visitors, in particular, the size and number of boats on the lake.

Details of the issues identified by the public in 2000 – 2001 are contained in two reports: the March 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report entitled *Phase I: Issues Identified By The Public in 2000 – 2001*, and; the May 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report entitled *Boating Workshop Summary*.

Details on the draft management plan public input process are contained in the November 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report entitled *Phase II: 2001 Public Input Into Draft Management Plan*.

3.0 ROLE IN ALBERTA'S PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK

3.1 Classification

Parks and protected areas vary in size, in the capability of their landscape to sustain visitor use, and in the sensitivity and significance of the natural heritage they preserve. Since no single park or protected area can be all things to all people, parks and protected areas are assigned to one of seven classes: Ecological Reserves, Wilderness Areas, Wildland Provincial Parks, Provincial Parks, Natural Areas, Provincial Recreation Areas, and Heritage Rangelands. Crimson Lake is classified as a Provincial Park.

Provincial parks offer a range of outdoor recreation opportunities and associated support facilities for the purpose of promoting the appreciation of their natural heritage and cultural features. As such, many provincial parks offer interpretive and educational programs to enhance visitor understanding, appreciation and respect of their natural heritage and cultural features. Provincial parks often provide auto access to staging areas and support facilities.

There are four program goals for provincial parks, which guide Alberta's system of parks and protected areas. They are: preservation, heritage appreciation, outdoor recreation and heritage tourism. Only sites of provincial or greater significance that are capable of providing high quality heritage appreciation, nature-oriented outdoor recreation or heritage tourism opportunities are established as provincial parks. Provincial Parks preserve Alberta's natural heritage and often become significant provincial tourism destinations. As a result, visitors can expect nature-oriented recreation opportunities, supported by facilities and heritage appreciation programs that reflect the following four program goals:

Preservation: Provincial parks preserve and protect a system of provincially significant natural landscapes, incorporating the greatest possible diversity of natural heritage and landscape-related prehistorical and historical resources.

Heritage Appreciation: Provincial parks provide opportunities for exploration, understanding and appreciation of natural heritage, through a range of interpretative and educational programs.

Outdoor Recreation: Provincial parks provide auto access and backcountry opportunities for outdoor recreation that are compatible with the preservation of natural heritage values.

Heritage Tourism: Provincial parks provide opportunities for provincial, national and international visitors to explore and experience Alberta's natural heritage.

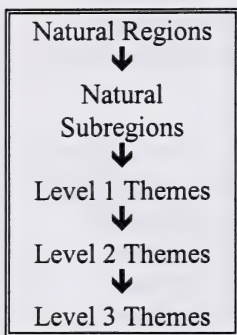
3.2. Natural Region Theme Representation

The Alberta government is committed to protecting representative samples of Alberta's natural and cultural heritage. The landscape classification framework, "Natural Regions

and Subregions of Alberta” helps define the contribution that an individual park makes to preserving the province’s natural heritage. The framework is a hierarchy of natural regions, subregions, and natural history themes. Natural regions provide the “big picture” of Alberta’s landscapes. The subregions and natural history themes are subdivisions of the natural regions, and provide a more specific picture of smaller areas.

There are six Natural Regions in Alberta: Boreal Forest, Rocky Mountain, Foothills, Canadian Shield, Parkland and Grassland. Differences between these regions are readily apparent by their distinct landform features and vegetation. Crimson Lake Provincial Park is part of the Foothills Natural Region.

(See Natural Regions and Sub Regions of Alberta Map, next page).



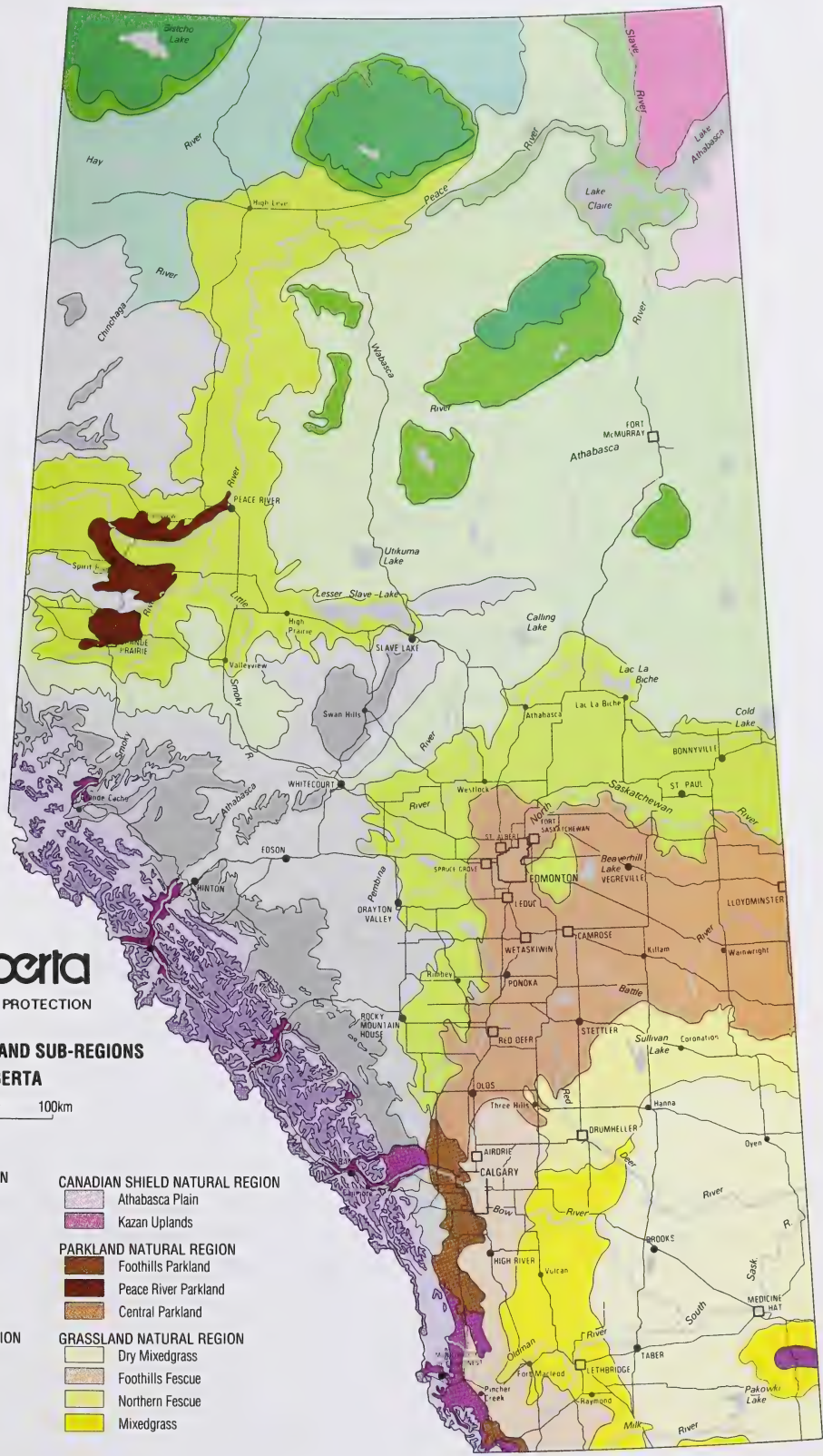
Each Natural Region is divided into subregions. Crimson Lake Provincial Park is located in the Lower Foothills Sub-Region of the Foothills Natural Region; it is one of the most diverse sites of the Lower Foothills.

Subregions are further divided into Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 Natural History themes. Level 1 themes are based on easily observed landforms. Examples of Level 1 themes in Crimson Lake Provincial Park are wetlands, lakes and valley walls.

Level 2 themes are more specific breakdowns of Level 1 themes. They refer to distinctive habitat types, vegetation, or highly visible geology features. Examples of Level 2 themes in Crimson Lake Provincial Park are lodgepole pine forests, muskeg streams and patterned fens.

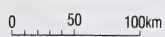
Level 3 themes are finer breakdowns of Level 2 themes. They include specific features such as rare plants and animals, and specific bedrock and landform types. Examples of Level 3 themes in Crimson Lake Provincial Park are slender-leaved sundews, round-leaved orchids, and blue herons.

The table that follows shows the Level 1 and Level 2 Natural History themes of Crimson Lake Provincial Park.



Alberta
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL REGIONS AND SUB-REGIONS OF ALBERTA



BOREAL FOREST NATURAL REGION

- Central Mixedwood
- Dry Mixedwood
- Wetland Mixedwood
- Sub-Arctic
- Peace River Lowlands
- Boreal Highlands

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURAL REGION

- Alpine
- Sub-Alpine
- Montane

FOOTHILLS NATURAL REGION

- Upper Foothills
- Lower Foothills

CANADIAN SHIELD NATURAL REGION

- Athabasca Plain
- Kazan Uplands

PARKLAND NATURAL REGION

- Foothills Parkland
- Peace River Parkland
- Central Parkland

GRASSLAND NATURAL REGION

- Dry Mixedgrass
- Foothills Fescue
- Northern Fescue
- Mixedgrass

Natural History Themes Crimson Lake Provincial Park	
Level 1 Natural History Themes	Level 2 Natural History Themes
Foothills Natural Region Lower Foothills Subregion	
Floor Stream	Fluvial Outwash* Glacial Outwash* Glacial Lacustrine* Springs* Muskeg Stream* Black Spruce Forest Pine Spruce Forest* Lodgepole Pine Forest* Aspen Forest* Balsam Poplar Forest Shrubbery*
Ridge/Valley Wall	Moraine Lodgepole Pine Forest Aspen Spruce Forest Aspen Forest
Mineral Wetland	Marsh* Swamp* Black Spruce Forest Shrubbery*
Organic Wetland	Bog* Patterned Fen* Non-patterned Fen* Black Spruce Forest* Tamarack Forest* Shrubbery* Graminoid*
Lake	Mesotrophic* Dystrophic*

* indicates well-represented theme in Crimson Lake Provincial Park

3.3 Purpose and Objectives of Crimson Lake Provincial Park

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is one of many sites within a large system of parks and protected areas in Alberta. As such, it plays a unique role in contributing towards the four program objectives of parks and protected areas. Crimson Lake Provincial Park contributes primarily to the preservation goal of parks and protected areas by preserving significant natural landscapes and making significant contributions to heritage appreciation, outdoor recreation and tourism. It was designated as a provincial park due to its ability to protect a significant natural landscape and features while providing quality recreational and heritage appreciation experiences.

The purpose of Crimson Lake Provincial Park is to:

- assist in protecting a land area representative of the Lower Foothills Sub-Region of the Foothills Natural Region
- provide opportunities for local visitors and tourists to experience the opportunity of outdoor recreation and education in a setting with adequate facilities and services

The objectives of Crimson Lake Provincial Park are based on the following four program objectives of parks and protected areas:

3.3.1 Preservation

Crimson Lake Provincial Park, at 3,209 hectares, is a medium-sized protected area. The park is representative of the Lower Foothills Sub-Region and much of the diversity of the central part of the Lower Foothills can be found within the park boundaries. Crimson Lake Provincial Park is well represented in Level 1 and 2 themes. This diversity is reflected in the plant and animal life of the park, where patterned fens, sand dunes, orchids, loons, great blue herons, and moose can be found.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park has the following preservation objectives:

- To protect the natural history features within the park that are representative of the Foothills Natural Region.
- To protect the wildlife habitat and species within the park.
- To protect Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes.
- To protect the vegetation and provide a natural environment in the park.

3.3.2 Heritage Appreciation

Crimson Lake Provincial Park provides an ideal opportunity to provide interpretation services of the Lower Foothills Natural Region. Centrally located within the province, in a populated area near Highway 11, the park is the most accessible protected area in the central portion of the Lower Foothills. By comparison, the extreme northeastern portion of the Lower Foothills Natural Region features Lesser Slave and Carson-Pegasus Provincial Parks, which have quite different landscapes. This wide range of natural history themes in close proximity provides an ideal opportunity for visitors to explore, appreciate and understand the diversity of the Lower Foothills.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park values heritage appreciation as an important component of the visitor experience. The park identifies the following heritage appreciation objectives:

- To provide interpretive and educational opportunities that will enhance visitors' understanding, use and enjoyment of the park.

- To provide environmental education opportunities for youth groups and school groups throughout the year.

3.3.3 Outdoor Recreation

Crimson Lake Provincial Park offers access to the Lower Foothills Sub-Region and is the only protected area in the central part of the Lower Foothills that offers a variety of recreational facilities and services in a natural setting for local, regional and provincial visitors.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park identifies the following outdoor recreation objectives:

- To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities (including swimming, beach activities, picnicking, camping, open play areas, boating, walking, biking, cross-country skiing, and skating) that enhance visitor enjoyment and understanding of the park's natural resources and surrounding area.
- To encourage a trail link to town and regional trail systems.
- To ensure that a proportion of recreation facilities are barrier free.

3.3.4 Tourism

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is a provincial destination for tourism. Its central location and proximity to Rocky Mountain House National Historical Site helps Crimson Lake Provincial Park integrate its tourism objectives into the Rocky Mountain House local tourism network.

The park identifies the following tourism objectives:

- To provide outdoor recreation and heritage appreciation opportunities for tourists that visit Crimson Lake Provincial Park.
- To cooperate with other tourism partners, such as Parks Canada, the Town of Rocky Mountain House, and the County of Clearwater.
- To support tourism opportunities, compatible with park objectives, that enhance the economic development of surrounding communities.

4.0 ZONING

To deal with the complexity of its land base, Crimson Lake Provincial Park is divided into zones with specific management and operational objectives. Zoning ensures long-term protection of park resources while directing visitor activities to the most appropriate areas of the park.

There are two management zones within Crimson Lake Provincial Park: the Facility Zone, and the Natural Environment Zone.

(See Zoning Map, next page).

4.1 Facility Zone

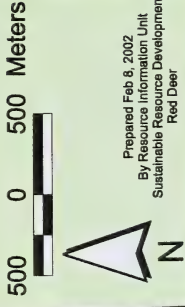
The purpose of the Facility Zone in Crimson Lake Provincial Park is to provide visitor support facilities for the enjoyment and convenience of park visitors. The Facility Zone covers the developed portion of the park. This encompasses the cottage area, Pioneer Ranch Camp, entrance and access roads, parking lots, campground facilities, group camping areas, playgrounds, operational and administrative buildings and day-use facilities, picnic areas and the beach.

4.2 Natural Environment Zone

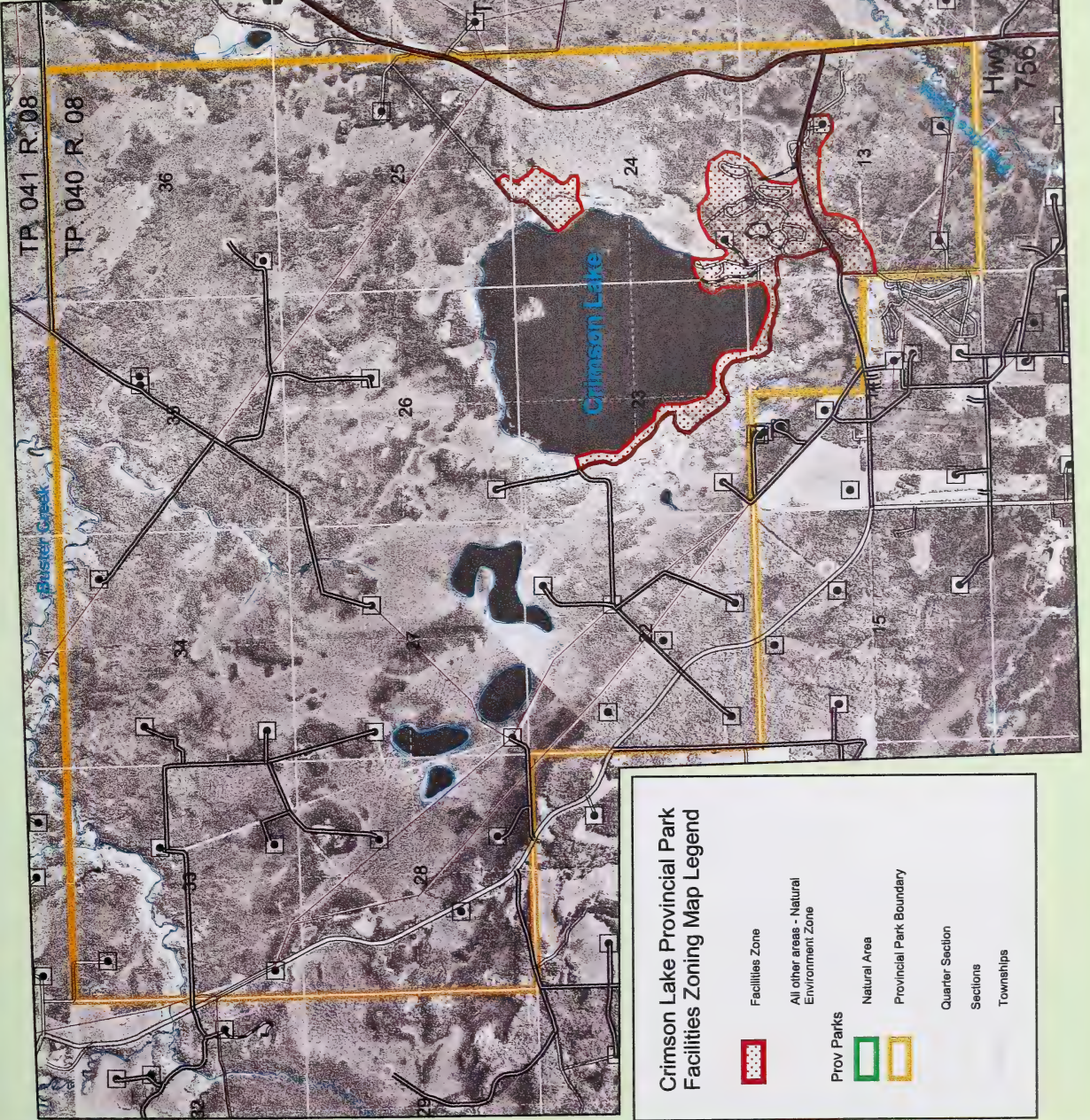
The purpose of the Natural Environment Zone in Crimson Lake Provincial Park is to protect the park's natural resources and features while providing formal access to bring visitors in closer contact with nature. The Natural Environment Zone covers the undeveloped portions of the park with emphasis on the preservation of the park's special features, such as patterned fens and nesting sites (i.e. blue heron colonies). The Natural Environment Zone in Crimson Lake Provincial Park contains energy dispositions, which pre-date the park's designation; they must be honoured because the mineral rights were committed before designation of the park.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park Provincial Park Zoning Map

Scale = 1:40,000



Prepared Feb. 8, 2002
By Resource Information Unit
Sustainable Resource Development
Red Deer



Crimson Lake Provincial Park Facilities Zoning Map Legend

-  Facilities Zone
-  All other areas - Natural Environment Zone
-  Natural Area
-  Provincial Park Boundary
-  Quarter Section
-  Sections
-  Townships

Twin Lakes Portion of Crimson Lake Provincial Park Facilities Zoning Map Legend

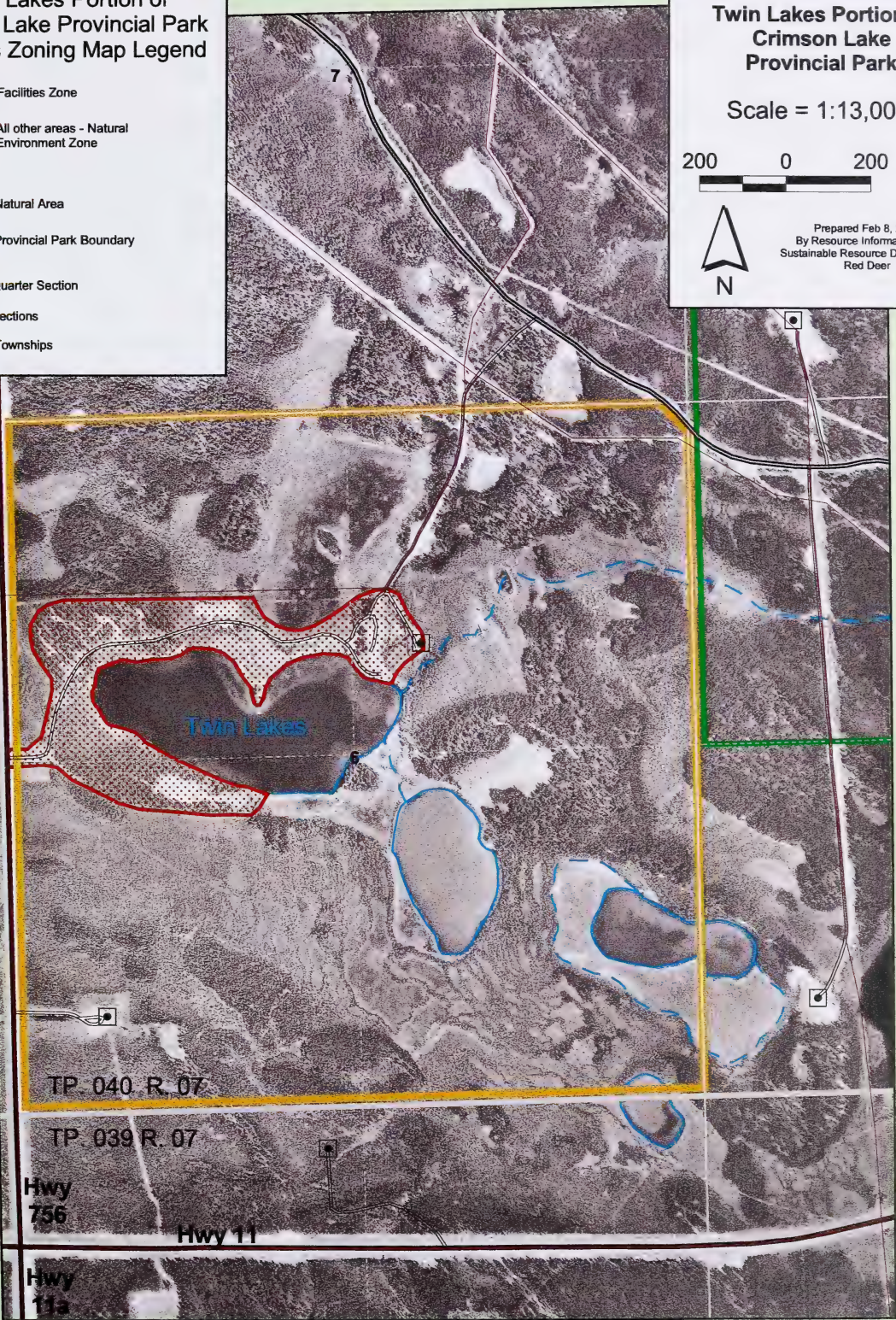
-  Facilities Zone
 -  Natural Area
 -  Provincial Park Boundary
 -  Quarter Section
 -  Sections
 -  Townships
- All other areas - Natural Environment Zone
- Prov Parks

Twin Lakes Portion of Crimson Lake Provincial Park

Scale = 1:13,000



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5.0 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The following management guidelines apply to both the Facility Zone and the Natural Environment Zone, except where noted otherwise.

Park resources will be directed to projects that address environmental issues, contribute to heritage appreciation and preservation objectives, and address infrastructure and safety concerns.

5.1 Resource Protection and Management Guidelines

Natural processes will generally be permitted to occur within Crimson Lake Provincial Park, as much as practical, with minimal interference or management. However, management action may be required to accommodate visitor facilities and visitor safety.

5.1.1 Wildlife

Crimson Lake Provincial Park supports a wide variety of wildlife and bird species that will be protected.

The park identifies the following wildlife management guidelines:

- Wildlife management will generally not be undertaken, except in cases where species are a threat to public safety or enjoyment of facilities (i.e. bears, cougars, beavers). Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas), as the department responsible for the province's parks and protected areas, will review, and support upon approval, efforts made by other organizations and agencies to enhance wildlife management on park lands.
- The park will protect the blue heron colony site that is located within the Natural Environment Zone. No facilities or activities will be permitted within 100 metres of the nesting site. Other nesting sites may be protected in a similar manner when possible.
- The park will work closely with Alberta Fish & Wildlife Division to continue the fish stocking of rainbow trout in Twin Lakes.
- Park boundaries will be signed to protect wildlife and natural resources.

5.1.2 Vegetation

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is home to unique vegetation, such as large patterned fens and wild orchids that will be protected.

The park identifies the following management guidelines:

- New vegetation planting will be done only with species that are native to the Lower Foothills Sub-Region of the Foothills Region.
- No hazard tree removal will occur in the Natural Environment Zone, except along trails. Hazard tree management in the Facility Zone will be limited to removal of dead and diseased trees that represent a hazard to people or park facilities.
- Noxious and restricted weeds will be controlled, as directed under the Weed Act.
- Control of insects and diseases affecting vegetation may be undertaken in the Facility Zone. Action may only be taken in the Natural Environment Zone if the outbreak has the potential to detrimentally affect lands outside of the park.

5.1.3 Aquatics

Aquatics form a major portion of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and are a key component of the park.

The park identifies the following management guidelines for aquatics:

- The park will monitor drinking water and beach water quality within the park, in conjunction with the local health unit.
- The park will monitor lake water quality, in conjunction with Alberta Environment.
- The park will monitor shoreline erosion conditions to protect wildlife, natural resources and facilities within the park.

5.1.4 Fire Management

Fire management planning is a necessary component of overall resource management planning within Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

The park identifies the following fire management guidelines:

- The park will maintain a fire management plan.
- The park will undertake the immediate suppression of all fires.
- Emergency response for structural fires (i.e. cottages) will rely on the County of Clearwater Fire Department, based in Rocky Mountain House.
- Prescribed burning will generally not be considered in Crimson Lake Provincial Park due to the presence of energy developments within the park boundary. When

energy developments no longer exist in the park, prescribed burns may be considered as an option for resource management.

5.1.5 Emergency Response

Emergency response planning is a necessary component of overall management planning within Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

The park identifies the following emergency response guidelines:

- The park will maintain an emergency response plan. The plan will deal will outline park procedures for handling such emergency situations as evacuations, park closures and searching for missing persons.
- The park will work in coordination with energy companies to prepare for emergencies relating to energy developments within the park.
- Appropriate action will be taken if pollutants released in the park are considered to be dangerous to humans or toxic to the environment.

5.2 Heritage Appreciation Management Guidelines

Heritage appreciation forms an integral component of the visitor experience at Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

The park identifies the following heritage appreciation management guidelines:

- The park will continue existing programs and will consider opportunities to upgrade and expand heritage appreciation activities that are in keeping with park objectives.
- Heritage appreciation activities will address natural feature themes, including:
 - Natural Regions of Alberta
 - Crimson and Twin Lakes and their aquatic environment
 - The wetland diversity of the park
 - Wildlife species and habitat within the park
 - Protected areas and their benefits
 - Management of the park following ecological principles
- The park will provide heritage appreciation programs. Delivery of year-round interpretive programs and environmental education programs will use non-personal media such as signs, displays and brochures. Staff and volunteers will provide personal interpretation when possible.
- A visitor centre, library and amphitheater will be located at Crimson Lake to provide a focus for programs, activities and displays.

- The park will promote opportunities with local schools and youth groups to use the park for outdoor education.

Development Considerations:

- Expansion of the heritage appreciation program will be considered to include year-round programming and upgrading of the visitor centre.

5.3 Recreation and Tourism Management Guidelines

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is committed to providing recreation and tourism opportunities that are in keeping with the natural environment of the park. The intent of the park's recreation and tourism efforts is to maintain and enhance existing recreation and tourism facilities. Major expansion of facilities and services will not be encouraged.

5.3.1 Campgrounds

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is committed to provided camping opportunities that are in keeping with park objectives. The intent of the camping opportunity at Crimson Lake is to provide campground services in a natural setting to accommodate a variety of recreational campers. The intent of the camping opportunity at Twin Lakes is to provide a rustic camping experience in a natural setting. Campgrounds will be accessible to all types of recreational camping units.

The Facility Zone at Crimson Lake Provincial Park will be managed to provide the following campground opportunities:

A campground with approximately 170 gravelled campsites at Crimson Lake and 40 campsites at Twin Lakes providing some or all of the following:

- A minimum of two barrier-free sites at Crimson Lake.
- Adequate washroom and shower facilities at Crimson Lake to meet peak usage requirements.
- A minimum of 50 campsites at Crimson Lake with electrical services.
- A minimum of three sets of playground equipment at Crimson Lake, and one set at Twin Lakes, maintained to Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards.
- A trailer dump and fill station at Crimson Lake for park visitors.
- A laundry facility site.
- No fixed roof accommodation.

Group sites will be made available at Crimson Lake Provincial Park. The group sites may feature power, water, vault toilets, and/or group picnic shelters. Groups no larger than 40 camping units may be accommodated at Twin Lakes. Groups no larger than 20 camping units may be accommodated at Crimson Lake.

Development Considerations:

- No major expansion of the campground is proposed. However, minor improvements may include:
 - planting of vegetation cover between sites
 - enlargement of campsites to accommodate larger camping units
 - improved barrier-free access
 - replacement of playground equipment to meet safety standards.
- Subject to budget considerations, upgrades will be considered for:
 - shower building(s) to meet peak usage requirements
 - additional washrooms to meet peak usage requirements
 - modified campsites to accommodate multi-site needs
 - dump station improvements to meet peak usage requirements
- Individual site services may be considered, such as sewer and water, provided the required infrastructure is in place.
- Site services may be considered at group sites, such as power and water, provided the required infrastructure is in place.

5.3.2 Day Use

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is committed to providing day use opportunities that are in keeping with park objectives.

The Facility Zone within the park will be managed to provide the following day-use recreation opportunities:

- The day use area at Crimson Lake will be approximately nine acres in total size, of which five acres will be for a picnic area. There will be a minimum of 50 picnic sites. Each site will contain at least one table.
- Four to five picnic sites in the area south of the south parking lot at Crimson Lake will be designed as small, informal group picnic sites. Each group site will have a fire pit and three to five tables.
- The day use area will provide a beach with a swimming area.
- The day use area will provide space for informal games such as baseball, volleyball, and frisbee.

- The park will provide parking for 200 vehicles and 25 boat trailers at Crimson Lake.
- The park will provide parking for 50 vehicles and 10 boat trailers at Twin Lakes.

Development Considerations:

- Consideration will be given at Crimson Lake to extending the beach and swimming areas farther southeast for swimmers and reducing the beach area at the north end to accommodate boating activities.
- Consideration will be given to the relocation and design of concession services at Crimson Lake.
- Consideration will be given to improving parking at Crimson Lake, to better accommodate existing usage.
- Consideration may be given to an alternate boat parking area at Crimson Lake to alleviate existing congestion.

5.3.3 Boating

Crimson Lake Provincial Park will offer a variety of boating opportunities on Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes. Some controls will be necessary to ensure public safety.

The park will be managed to provide the following boating opportunities:

- The park will provide a boat launch area at Crimson Lake.
- The park will maintain boating restrictions in the swimming area and reduced speed limits in the zone adjacent to the swimming area. Boating controls will be in accordance with the Boating Restrictions Regulations of the *Canada Shipping Act*, which provide for the establishment of restrictions to navigation in Canadian waters.
- The park will maintain the boating restriction that requires boaters to keep their speed to 10 km/hr in waters within 30 metres of shore. Boats that tow recreation users (i.e. water skiers) will be encouraged to leave perpendicular to the shore.
- The park will provide a boat launch area at Twin Lakes.
- The park will maintain a speed limit of 12 km/hr at Twin Lakes.

Development Considerations:

- The park will make efforts to minimize conflicts between boat users on Crimson Lake.

- No speed restrictions will be made on Crimson Lake, except relative to the swimming area and the shoreline.
- The park will reduce high-speed boating activities in the south bay area of Crimson Lake by extending the boating restrictions in the south east end of the swimming area and relocating boating activities to the north end of the beach area.
- The park will monitor boat activity and wake issues on Crimson Lake for the purposes of safety, shoreline impact, and protection of nesting activity.
- If boating conflicts continue on Crimson Lake, the park may consider other measures.
- The park will not support expansion of boating use on either Crimson Lake or Twin Lakes, nor will it support activities that may increase boating conflicts.

5.3.4 Trails

Crimson Lake Provincial Park will provide a recreational trail system, which offers visitors the opportunity for nature appreciation.

The park will be managed to provide the following trail opportunities:

- Trails will be for year-round use and will include 25 kms for walking, hiking, and biking, and 10 kms for cross-country skiing
- Equestrian use on trails in Crimson Lake Provincial Park is prohibited, with the exception of Pioneer Ranch Camp which has an agreement to leave the camp through the park by horseback
- Off-highway vehicle and snowmobile use on the park trails is prohibited

Development Considerations:

- Crimson Lake Provincial Park will encourage links from the trail system in the park to town and regional trail systems.
- The park trail system will be maintained to preserve its existing quality and size for park visitors.
- Expansion of the trail system for nature appreciation will be considered, in cooperation with energy companies as they reclaim roads and utility corridors.

5.3.5 Roads

The main road within Crimson Lake Provincial Park provides the primary access to the park and will be maintained as a paved surface. Interior roads (i.e. in campground) will be maintained as gravel surface.

- Dust control on gravel roads will be permitted.
- Currently, portions of the cabin road and access are maintained by the County of Clearwater.

Development Considerations:

- Upgrading of the main access road to Crimson Lake day use and campground areas will be considered, to improve traffic flow during peak use periods.

5.3.6 Special Events

Special events that focus on the natural attributes of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and are consistent with park objectives will be permitted.

- Special events will be considered that do not unduly restrict recreation opportunities of other users or impede ongoing resource activities. Events must not damage the natural or cultural resources of the area or place exceptional demands on the staff and budget resources of the park.
- Permission from the park Conservation Officer will be required prior to the date of any event.
- At least 30 days notice will be required to allow for staffing arrangements and facility preparation.

5.3.7 Commercial Activities

Commercial services will be limited within Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

- The park will permit a food concession in the day use area.
- The park will permit rental of non-motorized recreation equipment (i.e. bicycles).

Development Considerations:

- The food concession will be upgraded to blend in to the natural setting of the park.
- Power boat rentals will be prohibited.
- Other types of commercial activities may be considered, if they are in keeping with the natural environment and objectives of the park.

5.3.8 Park Shop and Office

Alternative uses for park shop and office sites will be considered, including use of sites for heritage appreciation and leasing of facilities to the private sector facility operator.

5.4 The Role of the Private Sector

Crimson Lake Provincial Park supports the involvement of the private sector in the operation and maintenance of park facilities. In addition, the private sector may play a role in the upgrading of facilities in the park.

The park identifies the following guidelines regarding the role of the private sector:

- Crimson Lake Provincial Park supports the involvement of the private sector in the operation and maintenance of park facilities and encourages partnerships that support the long-term preservation objectives and management plan of the park.
- Services provided by the private sector within Crimson Lake Provincial Park must be consistent with provincial-wide standards, the *Provincial Parks Act, Regulations, Policies and Procedures*, the long-term preservation objectives of the park and the Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Plan.

Development Considerations:

- The park will encourage the private sector to work cooperatively at Crimson Lake Provincial Park to operate, upgrade and maintain facilities and upgrade or construct new facilities (such as campgrounds, shower buildings and trails) for improvements that are identified in this management plan.

6.0 LAND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Crimson Lake Provincial Park contains a number of leases for recreational and industrial purposes. The park will honour all existing lease commitments. Management of leased lands will minimize impacts on both the natural environment and the public's recreational use of Crimson Lake Provincial Park. In the long term, Crimson Lake Provincial Park encourages the return of leased lands to the park on a voluntary basis.

The following management guidelines apply to both the Facility Zone and the Natural Environment Zone, except where noted otherwise.

6.1 Cottage Subdivisions

The Crimson Lake Cottage Subdivision predates the park's designation. The park will seek opportunities to work in partnership with the Crimson Lake Cottage Owners' Association on park endeavors.

- Cottages are for non year-round use.
- Expansion of the cottage subdivision area will not be permitted.
- The park will not provide services to the cottage subdivision.
- Cottage lot leaseholders will abide by the *Cottage Lot Development and Maintenance Standards* (July 1, 1992) (which outline standards for lot development, buildings and structures, utilities and service, and maintenance of cottage buildings and lots) and the *Disposition Regulations* for Crimson Lake Provincial Park.
- Existing use within cottage leases will focus on minimizing impact. Cottage lots will be developed and maintained to ensure that the natural environment of the park is protected. A consistent and qualitative standard of development will be maintained for the cottage subdivision.
- Existing developments that do not conform to the *Cottage Lot Development and Maintenance Standards*, and *Disposition Regulations* for Crimson Lake Provincial Park will be required to meet these standards and regulations when replaced or re-developed.
- Leaseholders must submit site and building construction plans for proposed cottage improvements to Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas) for approval prior to commencing construction.

- If a cottage leaseholder wishes to voluntarily relinquish their lease back to the park, the cottage site would be rehabilitated to match the park's natural surroundings.

6.2 Pioneer Ranch Camp

Pioneer Ranch Camp is a youth camp which provides an outdoor experience in a natural setting to various groups, but caters primarily to young people.

- Existing use within Pioneer Ranch Camp will focus on minimizing impact of the natural environment.
- The park will not provide services to Pioneer Ranch Camp.
- Use of the existing horse trail from Pioneer Ranch Camp to the outside of the park will be permitted. No additional horse trails will be permitted.
- Expansion of the Pioneer Ranch Camp lease area will not be permitted. Improvements within existing facilities will be considered.
- If the Pioneer Ranch Camp leaseholder wishes to relinquish their lease back to the park, the land from that lease would be rehabilitated to match the park's natural surroundings.

6.3 Energy Developments

Crimson Lake Provincial Park will honour existing energy development leases within the park.

- Existing use on energy disposition leases will focus on minimizing impact of both the natural environment and the public's recreational use of the park.
- Energy development in the park will eventually be exhausted, once energy resources have been fully extracted, and leases will then be reclaimed to match the natural setting of the park.
- No new surface disposition leases will be issued. Only existing oil and gas dispositions will be permitted within the park.
- No new surface disturbance will be permitted for the purposes of resource extraction. Only new developments from existing wellsite pads and right of ways will be permitted.
- The park will not provide services to energy development leases.

- Reclamation of leases and right-of-ways will match the park's natural surroundings. Opportunities to convert energy sites, or portions thereof, into new recreational uses (i.e. trails) will be considered during rehabilitation.

6.4 Park Expansion

The long-range intent of Crimson Lake Provincial Park is to increase the protected land area of the park by expanding the park to include crown lands between Crimson Lake and Twin Lake.

- Lands to be considered for park expansion include: the Rocky Mountain House Natural Area (PNT) adjacent to Twin Lakes (Twp 39, Rge 7, SE 32, Twp 40, Rge 7, NW 5, S 8 [west of River]); Twp 40, Rge 8 NE 15, Section 11, NW, SE, SW of 12, Section 1, NE, NW, SE of 2, Twp 40, Rge 7 Section 7, SW, 5, Twp 39, Rge 7 NE, NW 31 North of Highway 11, NW 32 north of Highway 11, NE, NW of 36 north of Highway 11.
- The above-mentioned lands are crown land, some of which contain land contain leases which will be honoured.

(See Crimson Lake Provincial Park - Park Expansion Recommendations Map, next page)

Crimson Lake Provincial Park Park Expansion Recommendations



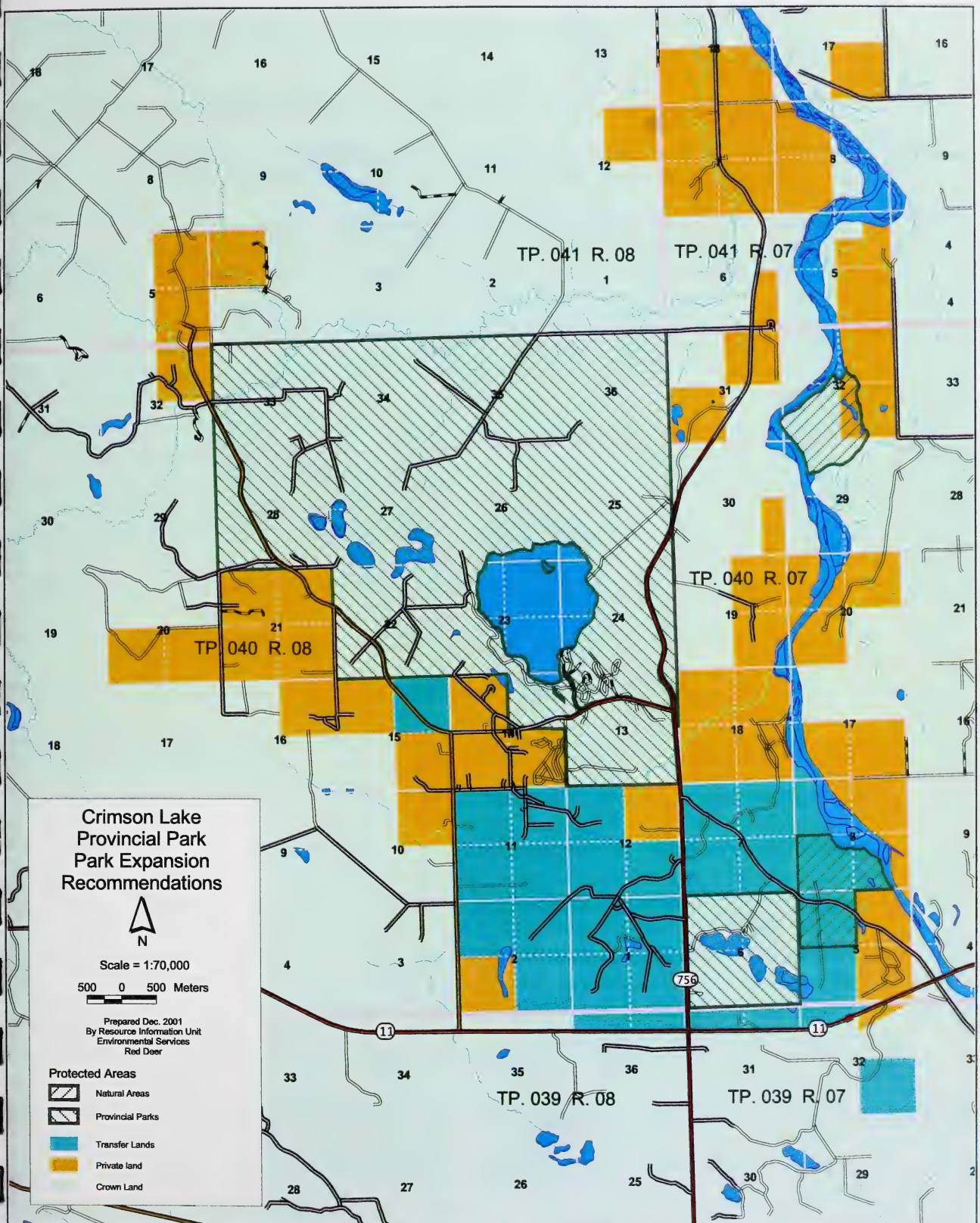
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Prepared Dec. 2001
By Resource Information Unit
Environmental Services
Red Deer

Protected Areas

-  Natural Areas
-  Provincial Parks
-  Transfer Lands
-  Private land
-  Crown Land



7.0 SURROUNDING LAND USE

Crimson Lake Provincial Park will work with the County of Clearwater to ensure that land use surrounding the park is compatible with park objectives.

- Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas) will discourage new activities that would increase recreational use of Crimson Lake Provincial Park in a negative manner.

8.0 COORDINATION GUIDELINES

Coordination of park management activities with other agencies and landowners is important to the successful operation of Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

- The park will endeavor to maintain regular contact with adjacent landowners.
- Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas) will contact other government agencies, such as the County of Clearwater and the Town of Rocky Mountain House, when issues arise where their input may be helpful.
- The park will seek opportunities to meet on a regular basis with Pioneer Ranch Camp and the Crimson Lake Cottage Association.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Implementation of Crimson Lake Provincial Park management plan will be the primary responsibility of Alberta Community Development (Parks and Protected Areas). Budget resources will be required to implement facility upgrading and improvements. Park redevelopment will proceed on a priority basis, as budget resources are available.

- The park will consider, and seek out, partnership opportunities to implement this management plan.
- Monitoring of this management plan will occur on an on-going basis, including review of the action requirements identified in this plan. Major unseen changes in the operation of Crimson Lake Provincial Park may require review of the management plan.
- As part of this management plan implementation strategy, a 10-year review will be held to confirm management direction for the park and to provide opportunities for public review and feedback.

**APPENDIX I:
LIST OF KEY RESOURCE REFERENCES**

A Framework for Alberta's Special Places, Natural Regions Report No. 1, Alberta Special Places, Alberta Environmental Protection.

Visitation Statistics Provincial Parks & Recreation Areas 1999/2000, Alberta Environment.

Phase I: Issues Identified By The Public in 2000 – 2001, March 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report

Boating Workshop Summary, May 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report

Phase II: 2001 Public Input Into Draft Management Plan, November 2001 Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Planning Report

APPENDIX II ACTION REQUIREMENTS

The following list summarizes the tasks necessary to implement the Crimson Lake Provincial Park Management Plan. The list is presented in the order in which the topics are outlined in the plan. The priority for completing each task, and responsibility for action, will be reviewed, as the annual work plan for Crimson Lake Provincial Park is prepared.

Heritage Appreciation

- Expansion of heritage appreciation programs will be considered to include year-round programming and upgrading of the visitor centre.

Campgrounds

- Minor improvements of the major campground may include:
 - planting of vegetative cover between sites
 - enlargement of campsites to accommodate larger camping units
 - improved barrier-free access
 - replacement of playground area to meet safety standards.
- Subject to budget considerations, upgrades will be considered for:
 - shower building(s), washrooms, and dump station to meet peak usage requirements
 - modified campsites to accommodate multi-party needs
- Site services (such as sewer, power, water) may be considered at individual and group sites provided the required infrastructure is in place.

Day Use

- Consideration will be given at Crimson Lake to:
 - extending the beach and swimming area to the southeast for swimmers and reducing the beach at the north end to accommodate boat activity.
 - the relocation and design of concession services.
 - modifying the parking area to better accommodate existing usage.
 - an alternate boat parking area to alleviate congestion.

Boating

- The park will make efforts to minimize conflicts between Crimson Lake boat users.
- No speed restrictions on Crimson Lake, except relative to the swimming area and the shoreline.
- The park will reduce high-speed boat use in the south bay area of Crimson Lake by extending the boating restrictions in the south east end of the swimming area and relocating boating activity to the north end of the beach area.
- The park will monitor boat activity and wake issues on Crimson Lake. If boating conflicts continue, the park may consider other measures.

- The park will not support expanding boating use, or activities that may increase boating conflicts, on Crimson Lake.

Trails

- The park will encourage links from its trail system to town and regional trail systems. The park trail system will be maintained to preserve existing quality and size for park visitors.
- Expansion for nature appreciation within the park will be considered, in cooperation with energy companies as they reclaim roads and utility corridors.

Roads

- Upgrading of the main access road to Crimson Lake day use and campground areas will be considered to improve traffic flow during peak use periods

Commercial Activities

- The food concession will be upgraded to blend in to the natural setting of the park.
- Power boat rentals will be prohibited.
- Other commercial activities may be considered, if they are in keeping with the natural environment and objectives of the park.

Park Shop and Office

- Alternative uses for park shop and office sites will be considered, including using sites for heritage appreciation and leasing facilities to the private sector facility operator.

The Role of the Private Sector

- The park will encourage the private sector to work cooperatively to operate and maintain facilities, and upgrade or construct new facilities (such as campgrounds, shower buildings and trails) for improvements identified in management plan.

Park Expansion

- The long-range intent of park is to expand park lands to include crown lands between Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes. Lands to be considered for park expansion include the Natural Area adjacent to Twin Lakes, as well as a number of additional crown land parcels.

Surrounding Land Use

- The park will work with County of Clearwater to ensure surrounding land use is compatible with park objectives.

Coordination Guidelines

- The park will endeavor to maintain regular contact with stakeholders, adjacent landowners and county and government agencies.

Plan Implementation

- Redevelopment will proceed on a priority basis, as budget resources are available.
- The park will consider, and seek out, partnership opportunities to implement this management plan.
- A 10-year review will be held to confirm management direction for the park and to provide opportunities for public review and feedback.

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